

Virginia State Rehabilitation Council
Meeting Minutes
November 17, 2009

A meeting of the Virginia State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) was held on November 17, 2009 at the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS), Richmond, Virginia.

Members Present: Karen Baugh, Sandra Cook, Daniel DeBoer, Charles Downs, Matthew Deans, Donna Kay Graff, Toney Lineberry, Kathleen Maybee, James Rothrock, Cherie Takemoto, Florence Watt, Karen Gregory-Williams, Celia Yette

Members Absent: Charles Benagh, Gregory Coleman, Stephanie Colorado, Shannon McManus Jones, Sarah Liddle, Marianne Moore

Others Present: Elizabeth Smith, Policy and Planning Director; Scott Fraley, Policy Analyst; Vanessa Rakestraw, Policy Analyst; Rick Sizemore, Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC) Director; Gale Pierce, Staff Support; Ernie Steidle, Chief Operating Officer; Cat Clough and Bernadette Mayhall, Interpreters; Eleanor Fields, Personal Assistant

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Charles Downs, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the August 10, 2009 meeting.

Matters of Public Comment: There were no comments from the public.

Chairperson's Report

- Sam Simon, former SRC member, was presented with a certificate to recognize him for his outstanding service to the Council.
- Danny DeBoer was presented with the 2009 SRC Chairperson's Award to recognize him for his outstanding service and leadership to the Council.
- Danny DeBoer will serve as the Chair of the External Affairs Committee and Karen Baugh will serve as the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee for Federal Fiscal Year 2010.
- Members expressed their appreciation for the Planning Retreat held the day before and felt that it was a good opportunity to get to know their fellow members better and to focus on their responsibilities and plans for the year.
- The following 2010 meeting dates were agreed to: January 25, March 15, May 10, August 9 and November 15-16 (with retreat). The March meeting will be held in conjunction with the Transition Forum in Roanoke.

Commissioner's Report

- DRS is applying for a NIDRR grant with the University of Richmond and the University of Virginia to examine the “return on investment” of the vocational rehabilitation program. DRS will need a letter of support from the SRC for the grant submission. If DRS receives the grant, we also will need a SRC member to serve on the grant advisory council.
- Commissioner Rothrock introduced Daisy Maldonado who has been hired as the agency’s new Statewide Multicultural Manager. Ms. Maldonado will attend future SRC meetings to brief the members on the plans to enhance outreach to individuals with disabilities with Limited English Proficiency.
- Commissioner Rothrock reviewed the Field Rehabilitation Services Division Performance Measure Report for Federal Fiscal Year 2009. The Regional Directors are preparing plans to be presented to the Commissioner by December 1 to lead to an increase in the number of successful employment outcomes.
- Agency management is putting into place plans to allow employees to effectively work from home in the event that the H1N1 virus affects their ability to come to the office.
- Commissioner Rothrock presented Cherie Takemoto with an award to recognize her for her leadership as the former Chair of the SRC.

DRS Program Reports and Working Lunch

Rick Sizemore provided the following information regarding the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC):

- The daily census at WWRC has increased from 265 at this time last year to 343. The increase in utilization is the result of the Life Skills Program.
- Rothrock Hall is at capacity with 23 residents and has a new referral coordinator placed in the Charlottesville Field Office.
- All of the WWRC training programs are at full capacity except construction trades. However, the vocational rehabilitation counselors have requested that the construction trade training program continue because of the future need for this program as the economy improves. The food service program has doubled in size due to demand. Counselors continue to receive the Open Windows report that gives them the status of the training programs and the wait list.
- Effective February 1, a one-week vocational evaluation program will be offered.
- The Life Skills program continues to expand and clients participating in this program are achieving a higher rehabilitation rate than those who do not participate in the program. There will be a Life Skills graduation ceremony on December 4 at 1:30 p.m.
- WWRC is going through budgetary adjustments to comply with the Governor’s budget reduction mandate of approximately \$800,000. Funding from ARRA is helping to “soften the blow” of this reduction. With anticipated staff reductions caused by upcoming retirements, WWRC will be instituting a Leadership Academy for employee succession planning.
- WWRC’s Blueprint for Direction is in place and being printed for publication by the WWRC Foundation and will be available electronically.

- Plans are underway for the renovation of Barnett Hall and the renovation of the Dining Hall continues on schedule and on budget. These renovations are being paid with capital improvement funds.
- WWRC is an advance distribution site for the H1N1 vaccine. One hundred doses have been received and given to students.
- WWRC has met with the regional Wounded Warrior representative and we continue to think that veterans will end up utilizing WWRC services.

Ernie Steidle reported on the status of the budget for State Fiscal Year 2010. As of September 30, 2009, 74% of the budget remains. DRS' budget reduction totaled \$10.6 million, but DRS received approximately \$10 million in ARRA funds.

Council Roundtable

Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC): Ms. Liddle sent a written report that was distributed to the SRC members.

Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center (PEATC): Ms. Takemoto reported that PEATC will be publishing on its website the results of a survey of parents of students in transition. A new survey of professionals who work with students in transition is being developed to ascertain their views on parental involvement. The PEATC webinars continue with over 1,000 participants to date. These webinars have been used by vocational rehabilitation agencies as in-service training programs. Future Quest is being held this on November 21, 2009 at George Mason University. Additional information can be obtained at the PEATC website at www.peatc.org.

Assistive Technology Advisory Council: Mr. Deans reported that a meeting was held on September 9th. A Virginia Assistive Technology System Fact Sheet is being developed to be placed on the website. Priorities continue to be the assistive technology recycling program and a \$600,000 grant was received from the Commonwealth Neurotrauma Initiative Trust Fund to support the program.

DBVI SRC: Mr. DeBoer reported on the September 19th meeting of the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired State Rehabilitation Council. The focus of the meeting was on the upcoming Rehabilitation Services Administration Monitoring Visit, the budget reduction and use of ARRA funds, and the loss of income to vendors caused by the closing of the Welcome Centers in Virginia.

Ms. Takemoto suggested that a report from the Virginia Office of Protection and Advocacy be added to the Roundtable Reports for future meetings.

Committee Reports

Internal Affairs Committee

Karen Baugh, Chair, reported on the following:

Mabel Fleming, DRS Senior Analyst, presented the 2010 Memorandum of Agreement between DRS and the SRC regarding the administration of the Consumer Satisfaction Survey. The survey instrument will be basically the same as last year's with some minor changes that were discussed with the Committee. The Committee agreed to bring a motion to the full council to accept the Memorandum of Agreement and to officially approve the FFY 2008 Consumer Satisfaction Report which was discussed with the SRC at the August 2009 meeting.

Susan Gaillard, DRS Training Manager, discussed the training needs assessment, which is being conducted to plan for the development of the next In-Service Training Grant Application to be submitted to the Rehabilitation Services Administration. The assessment has been forwarded to DRS employees; Ms. Gaillard requested that the SRC also complete the survey.

External Affairs Committee

Danny DeBoer, Chair, reported on the following:

Aileen Colorado and Sarah Ross presented the Committee with a draft of the 2009 SRC Annual Report. The theme this year is assistive technology and the report will include success stories. The committee members were provided the opportunity to discuss the report. The Annual Report will only be published electronically. Once this occurs, every Council member is encouraged to send a copy to his/her Legislator. Anyone desiring a hard copy of the report will be required to print his/her own.

The Committee also discussed the role of the SRC in public hearings as well as the SRC's efforts in reaching out to a broader community. The Committee is compiling a list of potential resources that may be able to assist in getting the word out about the work of the SRC. Danny DeBoer has agreed to maintain this list.

The SRC website needs to be improved as some of the information on the website is out of date. Mr. DeBoer encouraged members to review the website and provide him with any recommendations for change. Mr. DeBoer has agreed to meet with the webmaster after the first of the New Year in order to revise the website.

Mr. DeBoer stressed that the External Affairs Committee members will need to be more engaged between meetings to do the work of the Committee. In the future, members will be responsible for writing their own activities and accomplishments for the Annual Report. Members will maintain the SRC website. Vanessa Rakestraw, staff support for the Committee, will assist Mr. DeBoer in developing the agenda for the meeting and will assist Mr. DeBoer in keeping to the agenda. Ms. Rakestraw will also supply the minutes for the committee meetings.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

Terry Martin, Regional Representative from the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), joined the meeting by phone to discuss the upcoming RSA On-Site Monitoring Visit scheduled for December 7-11, 2009. Mr. Martin asked the SRC members for their thoughts on areas/issues to be discussed during the monitoring visit. Suggestions included the lack of participation at public hearings, best practices in vocational rehabilitation service provisions, reasons for unsuccessful rehabilitations, and outreach to culturally-diverse populations. Members were invited to submit additional ideas directly to Mr. Martin. Ms. Smith will provide the SRC members with Mr. Martin's Email address.

Ms. Takemoto made a motion for the SRC to send Governor-Elect McDonnell a letter to provide an orientation to the SRC and the value of the vocational rehabilitation program as a "jobs" program. It was agreed that the letter also could inform Mr. McDonnell of the need to have a Virginia Workforce Council member appointed to the SRC. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.